

**SNOHOMISH COUNTY CONSERVATION FUTURES
PROGRAM ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
MEETING MINUTES
Jan. 15, 2013**

Members Present: Dan Bartelheimer (Citizen Representative), Ann Boyce (Citizen Representative), City Councilmember Randy Lord (Large City Representative), Mayor Carla Nichols (Small City Representative), Brian Parry (County Executive Representative), County Councilmember Dave Somers, County Councilmember Stephanie Wright.

Staff: Dianne Bailey, Park Property Administrator, Snohomish County Department of Parks and Recreation, Sharon Swan, Senior Park Planner, Snohomish County Department of Parks and Recreation and Tom Teigen, Director, Snohomish County Department of Parks and Recreation.

1. The regular meeting of the Conservation Futures Program Advisory Board (Board) was called to order at 1:37 p.m. in the Jackson Board Room, Drewel Office Building, 8th floor, 3000 Rockefeller Avenue, Everett, Washington. A quorum of the Board was in attendance.
2. Introduction of Board Members: Board Members and staff introduced themselves around the table.
3. Election of New Chairperson: The Board proceeded to select a Chairperson of the Board. *Councilmember Dave Somers was nominated for Chairperson of the Board by Board Member Ann Boyce. The nomination was seconded by Councilmember Randy Lord. The Board approved the nomination of Councilmember Dave Somers unanimously, 7-0.*
4. Review and Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings: Minutes from the Sept. 26, 2012 special Board meeting were reviewed. *Mayor Carla Nichols moved that the minutes from the Sept. 26, 2012 special meeting of the Conservation Futures Program Advisory Board should be approved. Councilmember Randy Lord seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.* Minutes from the May, 22, 2012 regular Board meeting were reviewed. Councilmember Randy Lord moved that the minutes from the May 22, 2012 regular meeting of the Conservation Futures Program Advisory Board should be approved. Councilmember Stephanie Wright seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

5. Bond Issue for Open Space Acquisition from Conservation Futures Fund: Snohomish County Councilmember Dave Gossett provided an overview to the Board regarding the potential for issuing a bond for Conservation Futures funding, which could be used to acquire properties over the next three years. A similar bond was issued in 1996 for \$24 million and was used to fund 38 projects. Conservation Futures funding is currently being used to pay back an existing bond, which continues through 2017. If a new bond was issued, it would be in addition to the existing one and it is envisioned that interest only payments would be made until the current bond was paid back. Due to the low bond rates currently available as well as lower property values, the idea of a new bond is being considered and the presentation was made both to provide information and receive input from the Board on the idea.

The presentation was followed by discussion between Board Members and Councilmember Gossett. General points made in favor of the idea included being able to take advantage of low interest rates and property values and the ability to fund large, complete projects, as opposed to smaller pieces. The discussion regarding negatives of the proposal was focused around losing the ability to fund unique opportunities that may arise while funding is tied up with the bond and expending future dollars, as opposed to using only funding that has been collected and banked.

Overall, the Board expressed support for the idea, with one member in disagreement. The Board requested a schedule of funding over the span of the current and proposed bond. Approval of a new bond will be a Snohomish County Council action and will include an ordinance and public hearing process. If the bond moves forward, it is anticipated that it would be completed in April.

6. Conservation Futures Funded Project Map: Dianne Bailey presented and explained a map showing acquisitions made with Conservation Futures funding between 1991 and 2012. The map was created to show the distribution of projects around the county. The map distinguishes between fee simple purchases and purchases of easements. The map was also marked to show the locations of the proposed projects which would be discussed during the meeting. It was noted that \$80 million has been distributed through Conservation Futures over the twenty one years. Councilmember Dave Sommers asked if a map could be developed showing distribution of the projects funded with the first bond issue and it was also asked if the map could be made available to Board Members.
7. Overview of Application Process: Sharon Swan recapped the process used to develop application materials, which included direction from the Board to reinstate an application process and reworking of a previously used application to remove weighting factors and to add considerations of fund distribution around the county. The Board decided to hold discussion on application of weighting factors until after application presentations.

8. Project Presentations: Representatives for the following projects were invited to the table to provide an overview of their proposal and to answer questions from the Board. Each applicant was given fifteen minutes to discuss their project.
- a. Japanese Gulch Property Acquisition – Presentation by Paul Kaftanski (City of Everett Parks), Mukilteo Mayor Joe Marine and Paige Dechambeau (Japanese Gulch Group). Paul Kaftanski started presentation by indicating that he was there to represent support for the project from City of Everett. Mayor Joe Marine continued the presentation. The application request is for \$1,500,000 for continued acquisitions in Japanese Gulch. Ninety-eight acres remain to be purchased in the gulch. \$500,000 has previously been awarded from Conservation Futures and the city has been attempting to pass a bond to also support acquisition. Property is zoned industrial and risk of loss is considered to be high. It is estimated that \$6.2 million is needed to buy all remaining property.
 - b. Stocker Farm Property Acquisition – Application removed.
 - c. Stillaguamish River Tidal Estuary Access – Presentation by Deborah Knight (City of Stanwood). Application request is for \$156,000 to acquire Hamilton property (1.59 acres) on Stillaguamish River. Property would provide access to Stillaguamish River and connection to both Skagit Bay and Port Susan. The property is adjacent to land already owned by the city and would provide connection to Schuh property and planned trail alongside Hwy 532. Property also provides connection to properties owned by Stillaguamish Tribe and Nature Conservancy. Property has potential for contaminated soils as old industrial site and environmental assessment would occur prior to purchase.
 - d. Whitehorse Stilly – Presentation by Adam Draper (Forterra). Application request is for \$250,000 for 34 acres located on the north fork of the Stillaguamish River and also transected by the Whitehorse Trail. The property is timbered and provides a buffer for the trail and river. Property could be used for trails, camping, river access, etc. Ultimate owner/manager of property is not yet determined. Requested funding is half of amount needed to acquire. Remainder will be coming from other sources.
 - e. Lower Wallace River Conservation Area – Presentation by Adam Draper (Forterra). Application request is for \$250,000 for 135 acres of forest and riparian area on Wallace River. The property includes over 1 mile of Wallace river frontage and has significant value for fish habitat, especially due to proximity to fish hatchery across river. Property is currently on the market and could be divided for lots. Requested funding would be used as seed money and additional funding sought. Property is in proximity to and touches other public land.

- f. Whitehorse Trail –Dashiell – Presentation by Tom Teigen (Snohomish County Parks). Application request is for \$265,600 for 16.15 acres on the Whitehorse Trail. Property would be used as trailhead for the Whitehorse and already includes paved area that could be used immediately for parking. Dashiell property is located on a section of the trail that is currently open and is also adjacent to WDFW Fortson Mill property. Additional property owned by Dashiells is currently under permit for lot status and is for sale.
 - g. Lord Hill – Hall – Presentation by Tom Teigen (Snohomish County Parks). Application request is for \$417,600 for 5 acre in-holding within Lord Hill County Park. Property would be used for equestrian use and includes a house that could be utilized as office and meeting place. Equestrian use of Lord Hill is an important use of the park and equestrian recreation in general is a significant consideration in Snohomish County. The proposed acquisition shares a driveway with the park and acquisition of the in-holding would eliminate potential conflicts caused by this use. Property is not currently on the market.
 - h. Heybrook Ridge – Presentation by Tom Teigen(Snohomish County Parks) with Susan Susor and Sue Cross (Friends of Heybrook Ridge). Application request is for \$299,000 for acquisition of two parcels (5.59 acres) and purchase of a five year lease on an additional 2.77 acres, with option for another 5 year renewal. The proposed acquisitions will provide access to Heybrook Ridge County Park, which was purchased in 2008 with partial funding from Conservation Futures. The acquisition would connect Heybrook Ridge to the Town of Index trail system and climbing wall, as well as already existing connections to Wild Sky Wilderness.
 - i. Evans Land Acquisition – Presentation by Mayor Dan Rankin (Town of Darrington). Application request is for \$82,250 for 5.2 acres on Sauk River. Acquisition is adjacent to property acquired with Conservation Futures funding previously and land owned by Seattle City Light. An easement on the Seattle City Light property will allow all three holdings to be used together for public access. Acquisition is near another Town park and provides wetland and deciduous forest access. Current holding is used by school for teaching and proposed acquisition offer opportunity to expand on what already exists. Owner is willing to sell for \$75,000, which is below the 2012 assessed value of the property.
9. Funding Recommendations: Councilmember Randy Lord presented a spreadsheet evaluation methodology which was based around identification of mandatory criteria that needed to be met as well as criteria that would be defined by the Board and which would reflect priorities of the Board. An example spreadsheet was distributed and projected to demonstrate how the model worked. The model was reviewed as well as the example ranking of the projects. The Board expressed interest in the model, and suggested that

it be developed for the next grant round and a training session provided to Board Members on its use.

The Board continued with discussion on the relative merits of the various proposed projects and priorities for funding. *Chairperson Dave Somers moved that the proposed projects be funded as follows:*

<i>Japanese Gulch</i>	<i>\$300,000</i>
<i>Stillaguamish River Tidal Estuary</i>	<i>\$156,000</i>
<i>Whitehorse Stilly</i>	<i>\$250,000</i>
<i>Lower Wallace River Conservation Area</i>	<i>\$250,000</i>
<i>Whitehorse Trail/Dashiell</i>	<i>\$265,600</i>
<i>Lord Hill</i>	<i>\$0</i>
<i>Heybrook Ridge</i>	<i>\$299,000</i>
<i>Evans, Phase 2</i>	<i>\$82,250</i>

Discussion followed which included the request that communication be had with the City of Mukilteo and proponents of the Japanese Gulch project that the Board would expect and welcome future requests for support of their project. *Councilmember Randy Lord seconded the motion. The motion passed, 6-1.*

10. Set Time and Date for Next Meetings: It was decided that a special meeting would be held on April 2nd from 3 to 5 to work on scoring criteria for the next grant round. An Ad Hoc committee consisting of Councilmember Stephanie Wright, Councilmember Randy Lord, Board Member Ann Boyce and Dianne Bailey will meet to draft scoring criteria using methodology introduced by Councilmember Randy Lord prior to the Special meeting. Board Member Brian Perry will be informed of Ad Hoc meeting times and will participate as he is able. A meeting time was set for the next regular Board meeting, which will be used to cover administrative matters. The time of that meeting was set for May 6th at 3:30.
11. Adjournment: There being no additional business, Chairperson Dave Sommers declared the meeting adjourned at 4:54 p.m..